



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
District of Kansas

NEWS RELEASE

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KANSAS CITY, KANSAS, MAN SENTENCED FOR MAINTAINING A RESIDENCE FOR DISTRIBUTING METHAMPHETAMINE

KANSAS CITY, Kan. -- United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that **Johnathan C.F. Ellis**, 25, Kansas City, Kansas, was sentenced on May 14, 2004, by U.S. District Judge Kathryn H. Vratil to **eight years and four months in federal prison, without parole, to be followed by three years of supervised release.**

Melgren said that Ellis entered a guilty plea on January 12, 2004, to one count of maintaining a residence for distributing methamphetamine. Ellis admitted at his plea that he, along with co-defendant John R. Tidwell, had been renting a residence on South 55th Street, Kansas City, Kansas, since January 2003. Ellis further admitted that he knew Tidwell was distributing methamphetamine from the residence and that he paid the rent on the residence.

Co-defendant **John R. Tidwell**, 29, Kansas City, Kansas, was sentenced on March 29, 2004, by U.S. District Judge Kathryn H. Vratil to **20 years and 8 months in federal prison, without parole, to be followed by four years of supervised release.**

Melgren said that Tidwell entered a guilty plea on January 5, 2004, to one count of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute methamphetamine; one count of possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine; one count of possessing a handgun in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime; one count of maintaining a residence for the purpose of distributing methamphetamine; and one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Melgren stated that Tidwell admitted at his plea that on July 3, 2003, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at his residence on South 55th Street, Kansas City, Kansas, and found 42 grams (1.53 ounces) of methamphetamine, a loaded handgun hidden in the couch in the living room, a handgun hidden in the attic, ammunition and drug paraphernalia. Tidwell further admitted that his primary source of income was selling drugs. Tidwell further admitted

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that he had previously been convicted of a felony, aggravated battery, in 1997 in Wyandotte County, Kansas, and he knew it was unlawful for him to own or possess firearms and ammunition.

Melgren commended the excellent work of the Wyandotte County Sheriff's Department, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives in this investigation and Assistant U.S. Attorney Terra Morehead in this prosecution.